

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 FILE-01 /012 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/ S- O: WNEWLIN

APPROVED BY: S/ S- O: WNEWLIN

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P 031226 Z APR 73 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO THE WHITE HOUSE

INFO USDEL SAN CLEMENTE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 060896

EXDIS TOSEC 90

WHITE HOUSE PLEASE PASS SECRETARY ROGERS AT SAN CLEMENTE.

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM SAIGON 3 APR 73 REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T SAIGON 5507

EXDIS

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MOPS

SUBJECT: GVN PLANNING MILITARY ACTION TO RELIEVE TON LE CHAN.

1. KY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TOLD BENNETT APRIL 3 THAT THE
MINISTRY IS SENDING LETTERS TO THE 12 NATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE
PARIS CONFERENCE DRAWING ATTENTION TO COMMUNIST VIOLATION OF
THE CEASEFIRE IN ITS SIEGE OF TON LE CHAN AND RESERVING THE
GVN' S RIGHT TO TAKE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS
IN SELF- DEFENSE. (THE U. S. WILL BE ASKED TO FORWARD LETTERS TO
MOSCOW, BUDAPEST, WARSAW, UN SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE PRC.)
KY SAID THAT THE GVN CONSIDERS THE CONTINUING COMMUNIST ATTACK ON
TON LE CHAN TO BE PART OF A PLAN TO TAKE GVN TERRITORY IN
SUCCESSIVE BITES, EACH NOT LARGE ENOUGH TO WARRANT U. S.
INTERVENTION. THE GVN ALSO BELIEVES THAT THE COMMUNISTS HOPE AT
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TON LE CHAN TO HAND PRESIDENT THIEU A MILITARY DEFEAT WHILE HE IS ON HIS TRIP.

2. FROM MAJ. GEN. MURRAY OF USDAO WE LEARN THAT JGS HAS A PLAN TO RELIEVE TON LE CHAN AND THAT GROUND ACTION WILL BE PROCEEDED BY THREE DAYS OF AIR PREPARATION BY VNAF. AN OPERATION OF THE SCOPE NEEDED TO RELIEVE THE GARRISON AT TON LE CHAN WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY LEAD TO HEAVY FIGHTING. MURRAY BELIEVES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER MUST OBTAIN THIEU'S APPROVAL BEFORE.

B. MR II: ONLY GROUND ACTIONS WERE MINOR CLASH NORTHEAST OF PA DONG AND MINOR SHELLING NORTHWEST OF BOUAM LONG, BOTH ON 2 APRIL (NO CASUALTIES).

C. MR III: THERE WERE THREE MINOR INCIDENTS. IN AREA APPROX 25 KM SOUTHEAST OF THAKHEK, ENEMY SHELLED ONE POSITION ON 1 APRIL (ONE FRIENDLY WIA) AND PROBED ANOTHER ON 2 APRIL (ESTIMATED THREE ENEMY CASUALTIES). FRIENDS CAPTURED 33 CASES MORTAR/ SMALL- ARMS AMMO AFTER LATTER INCIDENT, AND ALSO FOUND CACHE OF 90 ROCKET/ MORTAR ROUNDS EAST OF THAKHEK ON 30 MARCH. FRIENDS EXPENDED 921 ARTILLERY ROUNDS AGAINST UNSPECIFIED TARGETS WITH UNKNOWN RESULTS SOUTH OF THAKHEK ON 30 (CORRECTION OF REFTEL) AND 31 MARCH. THIRD MINOR INCIDENT WAS SHELLING NORTHWEST OF DONG HENE ON 2 APRIL (NO CASUALTIES).
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D. MR IV: ONLY INCIDENT WAS TEAM CLASH NORTHEAST OF KHONG SEDONE ON 2 APRIL (NO CASUALTIES).

E. MR V: ONLY INCIDENT WAS MINOR CLASH APPROX 40 KM EAST OF PAKSANE ON 31 MARCH (ONE FRIENDLY WIA, ELEVEN M-16'S LOST).

F. COUNT OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS: RLG DEFMIN ANNOUNCED ZERO ADDITIONAL CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, LEAVING TOTAL AT 341 AS OF MORNING 31 MARCH. (COMMENT: OUR COUNT OF GROUND CONTACTS INITIATED BY BOTH SIDES SHOWS 75 MAJOR AND 455 MINOR INCIDENTS THROUGH MARCH 30. END COMMENT)

2. SECTION II - POLITICAL SITUATION

A. TODAY, FOR FIRST TIME SINCE THE SESSIONS BEGAN LAST OCTOBER 17, TUESDAY TALKS MEETING WAS CANCELLED. RLG

, AND LPF AGREED TO, CANCELLATION TO PERMIT
DEL CHIEFS NGON SANANIKONE AND PHOUN SIPRASEUTH TO
CONTINUE THEIR DAILY PRIVATE NEGOTIATING MEETINGS. LPF
NEGOTIATOR TIAO SOUK VONGSAK CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF, APRIL
2, THAT IN PROTOCOL TABLED BY LPF IN PRIVATE MEETINGS
COALITION GOVERNMENT WAS ONLY ONE ISSUE IN A TOTAL
PACKAGE ON WHICH AGREEMENT MUST BE REACHED BEFORE NEW
PGNU CAN BE FORMED.

B. SOVIET ANTONOV-2 FLEW TO SAM NEUA MORNING APRIL 3
AND IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO VIENTIANE APRIL 4.
DEAN

#2479

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: hilburpw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE060896
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: WNEWLIN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730432/aaaahnda.tel
Line Count: 140
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hilburpw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Sep-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <16-Nov-2001 by hilburpw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971120
Subject: GVN PLANNING MILITARY ACTION TO RELIEVE TON LE CHAN.
TAGS: MOPS, US
To: SAN CLEMENTE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005